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God's Call of His Ministers,
IN A
SERMON

Preach'd in the
Parish - CHURCH
OF
St. Mary White-Chappel,
On Sunday the 16th of Septemb. 1711.

K
By *William Richardson*, lately a Dissenting
Preacher in *Pin-maker's Hall*, and *St. John*
Clerkenwel, LONDON; but now Ca-
nonically Ordain'd a Presbyter of the
Church of England.

When thou art Converted, Strengthen thy
Brethren. Luke xxii. 32.

The Fourth Edition, Corrected.

L O N D O N: Printed by *J. Applebee*, for *Geo.*
Strahan, at the *Golden-Ball*, and *John Phillips*, at
the *Black Ball* in *Cornhill*: And Sold by *John*
Morphew, near *Sationers-Hall*.

Price Three pence.



To the Right Reverend Father in God,
Henry Lord Bishop of L O N D O N.

My LORD,

A *S I am instructed by the Ancient Fathers to give the Title of Chief, or High-Priest to the Bishop. qui est Summus Sacerdos : So my own Experience obliges me to acknowledge that your Lordship has been to me, as well as many others, a Gracious High-Priest, who shews great Compassion toward the Ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. Your Lordship, as a good Shepherd, both by your self, and Excellent Clergy, who are subject to you, shew a suitable Zeal for bringing back the Sheep which have gone astray, and you receive them with open Arms into the Church. It has been my great unhappiness to have been so long engag'd in a woful Schism, and to have taken upon me to Officiate as a Minister, which I am now Convinced I had no right Call to do. I have publish'd my Retraction in the following Discourse, which contains the Chief Reasons of my coming out from among them, and my begging admission into the Church. This Discourse is my Sermon Preach'd at White-chappel, Corrected and Enlarg'd, with design that my Acknowledgments might be more full, and the Discourse more usefull, if it shall please God to give his Blessing, towards the Conversion of my late*
Brethren,

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The Dedication.

Brethren, several of whom indeed have a Zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. I lay hold of this Opportunity, to give this Testimony of my Gratitude to your Lordship, and to own to the World, that I am, with great Veneration,

May it please your LORDSHIP,

Your LORDSHIP's

Most Obedient Servant,

WILLIAM RICHARDSON.

H E B R.

HEBR. V. Ver. 4, 5.

And no man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

So also Christ glorified not himself, to be made an High-Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

IN the foregoing Verses, the Apostle St. Paul sets forth the Personal Qualifications, and the Duties of the Sacred Function of the High-Priest, and in the Words of my Text, his Call to that most Honourable Office.

THE former made him meet for it, the latter vested him with a Title and Right to it.

The Consequence is, that for One to be separated from the body of the People, to stand before the Lord to minister unto him, and to bless in his Name; to be entrusted with the Ministry of Reconciliation betwixt God and Man, and Christ's Ambassador to Men, he must be duly called, a right Method and Order must be observ'd: The Heavenly Jerusalem, the Mother of us all, is, by the Almighty God, the Lord and Father of that Family,

Family, preserv'd in the greatest Order, and best Government, and can we imagine that he has taken no care of his Family upon Earth, his Church Militant, when all wise Men are agreed that Order and Government are indispensibly and essentially necessary to the Preservation, Peace and Welfare of every Society ; in which there must be a due Subordination, which is inconsistent with Parity ; for, where there are none to command, none will obey, and where every one is set loose from the Yoke of Government, to do what is *right in his own eyes*, what pleases him best, Confusion, and every evil Work will be the unavoidable Consequences. To prevent which dreadful Evils, our Blessed Saviour hath instituted several Orders of Officers in his Church, to be continued to the end of the World, and promis'd to be *with them alway, even unto the end, and the consummation of all things*. For when he ascended up on high he gave Gifts unto Men, some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ : Till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the Stature of the Fullness of Christ. Ephes. iv. 8. ii. 12, 13.

St. John the Baptist tells us, *A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven*, John iii. 27. Let me ask these few Questions. Can any Man stand before the Lord to minister to him, unless chosen by him? Can he dispense the Ministry of Reconciliation, unless it be committed

mitted to his Trust by God? Can he execute the Office of an Ambassador of Christ, unless appointed by his Principal? Can he remit or retain Sins, without being authorized by him, to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth is given? who said, As my Father sent me, so send I you. Can any Man bless, in the Name of God, with effect, but he whom God has impower'd, to bless in his Name? Can any Person ratifie and seal God's Covenant with Men, but he who has receiv'd full Powers from Heaven for that End? Or, Can they Preach, except they be sent? Or, in the Words of my Text, Can any Man take this Honour to himself, &c. 'Twould be Blasphemy to answer any one of these Questions in the Affirmative, and contrary to the exprefs Texts of Scripture.

Until it pleas'd God to make the Children of *Israel* his peculiar People, the Priesthood appears to have been appropriated to the First-born, and the *major Domo*, or Father of the Family executed the Priestly-Office; and for that Reason *Esau* is stigmatiz'd by the Apostle, *Heb. xii. 16.* as a prophane Person, for *selling his Birth-right*. But when the Almighty brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and *Judah* was become his Sanctuary, and *Israel* his Dominion, He separated the Tribe of *Levi* from the Congregation of *Israel*, to bring them near to himself, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the Lord, instead of all the first-born among the children of *Israel*, &c. *Num. iii. 45. xvi. 9.* But he conferr'd the Priesthood upon *Aaron* and his Sons, and appointed *Moses* to consecrate him with great Solemnity before the whole Congregation, as you have
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it at length, *Exod. xxviii. and Lev. viii.* Accordingly *Moses* consecrated *Aaron*, *Agitatus a Deo consecrationis principe*, says *Dionysius*; that is, *Stirred up by God the Principal, or Author of the Consecration*, *Moses* perform'd the external Rites of Consecration, but God was the Consecrator. *Moses* appointed *Aaron* to the Priesthood, but it was only as the Minister and Deputy under God, the Chief Consecrator. *Aaron* deriv'd his Honour and Office from God, and not from his younger Brother. *No man taketh this Honour, &c.* nor receives it, but from GOD.

In discoursing on these Words, I shall observe the following Method.

- I. I will speak in a few Words to the *Honourableness of the Ministerial Office.*
- II. Shew that *Episcopal Ordination only*, can confer that *Sacred Office.*
- III. That *Valid Orders* cannot be conferr'd by any of the *Dissenters*, of whatever Denomination.
- IV. The Necessity of an outward Call,

First, I shall not spend time to prove, that before the Institution of the Aaronical Priesthood, that Office was never separated from the Primogeniture; The *First-born*; the *Excellency of Dignity*; the Chief of the Family, was always Priest; and as God claim'd a Right of having him devoted to himself, so his Sacerdotal Office was the greatest Honour he possess'd. 'Twas that
which

which made *Melchisedeck, the Priest of the most High GOD*, greater than the Patriarch *Abraham, the Heir of the World, that had the Promises*; for *Melchisedeck* blessed him, and, as the Apostle adds, without all Contradiction, the less is Blessed of the greater, *Heb. vii. 6, 7.* Neither shall I enlarge on the Esteem, and Honour the Priestly Office was had in amongst the Heathens, who had nothing but the Light of Nature, or obscure Tradition, to guide them, how their greatest Kings and Emperors join'd the Sacerdotal to their Regal and Imperial Dignity.

'Tis obvious to all who are acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, that even under the Law, the Dignity, Authority and Power of the Priests were great, as were the Blessings by their Ministrations to the People. How Glorious were the Apparel and Appearance of the High Priest? And yet, when the Apostle makes the Comparison, how far does the Evangelical Ministry transcend the Legal? *2 Cor. iii. 7. &c.* If the *Ministration of Death Written and Ingraven in Stones* was Glorious; so that the Children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the Face of Moses; for the Glory of his Countenance, which Glory was to be done away; how shall not the *Ministration of the Spirit* be rather Glorious? For if the *Ministration of Condemnation* be Glory, how much more doth the *Ministration of Righteousness* exceed in Glory. And in the next Verse, it is called the *Glory that exceedeth.*

The Epithets given by the Spirit of God, throughout the New Testament, to the *Ministers of it*, are so Great and Honourable, as to

raise their Dignity, and command Veneration. They are stiled, the *Shepherds of Christ's Flock*, under the *great Shepherd*; *Governors and Rulers of the People*; *Ministers of Christ*; *Priests of God*; *the Salt of the Earth*; *burning and shining Lights*; *Lights set upon a Candlestick*; *Stars*; *Angels*; *Ambassadors of Christ*; *Dispensers of the Mysteries of God*; *Apostles of the Churches*; *the Glory of Christ*; *Treasurers of God*, to dispense the *Riches of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ*. And if such an Office be honourable among Men, it is strange, if it be not so in the Church, in them who make it their business to enrich the World with the unsearchable and inexhaustible Riches of Christ: For it is they who shew the Mine of incomparable Treasure, they dig it up, and offer it, as Spiritual Merchants, to the People; God enriches the whole World by them. This Treasure is not committed to the Angels, it is put in Earthen Vessels, *that the Excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us*, 2 Cor. iv. 7. I say, it's dispens'd by the Ministers of Christ, *whom we preach*, says St. Paul, *warning every Man, and teaching every Man in all wisdom, that we may present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus*, Col. i. 28. But that which raises the Priesthood to the highest Pitch of Honour, is, that the Son of God, *the Brightness of his Father's Glory*, *the express Image of his Person*, *whom all the Angels of God do worship*, became a High Priest, and perform'd all the Parts of that Office for the lost Race of Mankind, in Praying, Offering himself a Sacrifice for us, Blessing us, and Interceeding at the Right-Hand of God for us. And yet, even He, *glorified not himself to be an High Priest, but*
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he that said unto him, *Thou art my Son, &c. Thou art a High-Priest for ever, after the Order of Melchisedeck.*

The Reasons of this great Honour due to the Clergy under all Dispensations, are chiefly these two, tho' it were easie to bring many. 1st. The near Relation they have to God, as being in his stead to his People, and as being in their stead towards God, *seemeth it a small thing to you, ye sons of Levi? saith Moses, That God hath chosen you to be near to himself, &c.* The second Reason is given by our Apostle, *1 Thes. xii. Ver. 13. And we beseech you brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love, for their Work's sake.* And, *Heb. xiii. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you; and to submit your selves, for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with Joy and not with Grief, for that is unprofitable for you.* I pray God, that what is said on this Head from His Word, may prevail with my Hearers to pay those Dutiful Regards they owe to all those that are *over them in the Lord*, that will turn to the best Account to the People, when their Pastors give Account with Joy, and not Complaint.

And as for the Clergy, Is their Post so exceeding Honourable? Then let them be diligent in performing all the Offices of their Sacred Function, let them both by their Life and Doctrine, set forth the Glory of God, and set forward the Salvation of all Men. *Seeing we have this Ministry; as we have receiv'd Grace, let us not faint, but renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking*

in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, let us commend our selves to every man's Conscience, in the sight of God, and then if Israel be gather'd, we shall have great cause of rejoicing, if not, yet shall our reward be with the Lord; for we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are sav'd, and in them that perish; to the one, we are the savour of Death unto Death, and to the other, the savour of Life unto Life; Who is sufficient for these things? 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

The second Head, that *Episcopal Ordination only can confer the sacred Office of the Ministry.* Under the Jewish Oeconomy, there were three Orders of Ministers appointed by God, the *High Priest*, the *Priests* and *Levites*. And it has been observ'd by diverse of the Fathers, that the Orders of *Bishops, Presbyters* and *Deacons* succeeded them, *Quod Aaron et filii ejus atque Levitæ in Templo fuerunt, hoc Sibi Episcopi, Presbyteri atque diaconi vendicent in Ecclesia.* The same Ranks which *Aaron*, his Sons and the *Levites* held under the Law, do the *Bishops, Presbyters* and *Deacons* hold in the Christian Church; as *St. Jerome* affirms in his Epistle to *Evagrius*, and before him *Clemens Romanus* in his to the *Corinthians*.

I shall endeavour to shew both from the Scriptures, and earliest Fathers, as far as the time will allow me, the superior Authority, Powers and Rights of the Bishops to all other Church Officers, especially in Ordination and Jurisdiction, and that none have Power to Ordain without, much less in Opposition to them.

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To begin then with the Scriptures, you are to take notice, that Our Blessed Saviour, during the Course of his Ministry on Earth, sustain'd the place of the High Priest and Bishop, and is called by both these Names, as appears from *Heb.* iv. 14. and *1 Pet.* ii. 21. and under him were the Apostles, and below them the LXX Disciples. This answers to the High Priest, Priests and Levites under the Mosaical Dispensation. After his Ascension, and his sending the Holy Ghost, his Gifts were plentifully bestowed on his Church, as appears from *Ephes.* iv. and *2 Cor.* xii. where it is as clear as the Light, there were Supream, and many Subordinate Officers in the Church, and among the last different Degrees. But seeing some of these were Temporary, I will endeavour to make appear, that the Apostles constituted and ordain'd Bishops, to ordain Presbyters and Deacons, and to govern them and Churches committed to their Charge; and in that Character, to be succeeded to by others, to the end of the World. *Hege-*
sippus tells us †, That the Apostles con-
stituted *James* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and
after him, *Simeon Cleopas*, who both were near Kin-
men of our Blessed Saviour. In the first and fa-
mous Council of *Jerusalem* recorded, *Acts* xv. in
which several of the Apostles were present, it may
be taken for granted, that St. *James* presided, from
Ver. 19. wherefore, says he, *my Sentence is*, &c. to
which, the Apostles and Elders with the whole
Church agreed, Ver. 28, 29. In Chap. xxi. 18, 23.
we have another undeniable Instance of St. *James's*
Pre-eminency. In this Matter the Ecclesiastical
Historians

† Euseb. *Hist.*
Eccles. l. 3. c. 32.

Historians agree. As the exceptions made against this are trifling, so it would be too tedious to take notice of them here. I shall proceed then to other Instances, which are unexceptionable and full to my purpose, which is to shew, that Episcopal Ordination and Jurisdiction have express Warrant in Holy Writ. The first of which, shall be that in *Tit. i. 5.* *For this cause, saith St. Paul to Titus, ordain'd the first Bishop of the Church of the Cretians, left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, or left undone, and Ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.* The large Island of Crete, now call'd *Candia*, very populous, having in it no less than a Hundred Cities, for which cause, it had the Name of *Ectempolis*, was committed to the care and oversight of of *Titus*, who was to Ordain Elders or Presbyters in every City of that large Diocess. 'Tis no less evident from this Text, that *Titus* had the Power of Ordination, than it is throughout the Epistle, that he had the power of Jurisdiction and Government. He was to set Church-matters in order, he was to judge of the Qualifications of the Candidates for the Holy Ministry, he was to stop the mouths of the Unruly, and Vain-talkers and Deceivers, to rebuke with all Authority, and to reject Hereticks after the first and second Admonition. 'Tis *Titus*, I say, that had this Power and Authority, and neither the Clergy nor People under his Care. Let me then ask my late Brethren the Dissenters, how they came by such Powers? Who can stop the Mouths of Deceivers, and purge Hereticks out of the Church but the Bishops? To them, it appears both from what is

is said, and other Scriptures, was committed the plenitude of Power. Deceivers and Hereticks are generally knowing and cunning Men, their Leaders at least, and can easily find the Vanity and groundless Pretensions of unauthoriz'd Preachers to censure them. They will likewise find many of them to be poor illiterate Mechanicks, and which is worse, unsound in their Doctrine, False Teachers, Antinomians, preaching up in this City Free-Grace to the Destruction of Good Works, which we ought *carefully to maintain* : For as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also, Jam. ii. 26.

The next Instance I shall bring for Episcopal Ordination and Jurisdiction shall be in *Timothy*, settled by St. Paul at *Ephesus*. St. Paul instructs him fully how to acquit himself in every Part of his Episcopal Office, and to make full Proof of his Ministry. 1 Tim. v. 22. *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens sins, keep thy self pure.* The Dissenters themselves allow this Text to be understood of Ordination, which was always solemniz'd with the Ceremony of Imposition of Hands. The Offices to which *Timothy* was to ordain were those of Presbyters and Deacons. The Qualifications required of such as were to be promoted, are fully set forth by the Apostle, as are the Duties they were obliged faithfully to perform, throughout the whole Course of their Ministry. But in regard, that through the Corruption and Frailty of Men, and the Temptations of the Devil and the World, even some of them, who were solemnly set apart for Holy Offices, might degenerate, and become

come unworthy, not only of their Stations, but even of being Members of the Church, the Apostle gives *Timothy* the power of Discipline, *1 Tim. v. 19. Against an Elder receive no accusation, but before two or three witnesses,* and ver. 20. *Them that sin rebuke, &c.* The hearing of Ecclesiastical Causes, the receiving or rejecting of Accusations brought against Presbyters, the examining of Witnesses, and giving Judgment after full Hearing, are Demonstrations of the Episcopal Jurisdiction, and the power of Discipline in *Timothy*.

By this time I think I have sufficiently made appear from the Holy Scriptures, that the power of Ordination and Jurisdiction belong to the Bishops. And seeing at the mouth of two or three Witnesses every matter is Establish'd, I take the Truth I assert, to be as fully prov'd as the Witnesses I have brought, which are *St. James, Timothy* and *Titus*, are unexceptionable.

But because my former Brethren and Friends demand Scripture-proofs for every thing on the Church's side, I shall add one more from the Angels of the Seven Churches mention'd in the first three Chapters of the *Revelation* of *St. John the Divine*. I see no Reason to doubt of their having the same Power with those I have already named.

* P. 6. Pref.
ad Apol. &c.

'Tis evident from the Epistles written to them; and *Blondel* * himself that they owns, were accountable for what Male-Administrations happen'd in their respective Churches. But this could not have been, if *Ordinations* could have been perform'd without them. For the right Administration of the Affairs of a Church depends chiefly on the Care
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that is taken, that her Officers be worthy Men, fit for their Employments, and, consequently, they must have been Ordain'd by, and subject to those Angels, who stood accountable for their Behaviour.

The *Dissenters* object, as to the Scripture-Period, which I have hitherto insisted on, the seeming promiscuous use of the Words *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, or *Elder*. Tho' this Objection hardly deserves any Answer, yet I think my self obliged to expose the Weakness of it, because too many have the Misfortune to be impos'd on by it. Should the promiscuous use of Words infer all to whom they are apply'd to be of the same Order, then the Apostolical Order would be levelled with the Orders of Presbyters and Deacons, which is absurd. *St. Peter*, 1 Ep. v. 1. calls himself an Elder, and *St. Paul* designs himself and all the Apostles, *Deacons of the New Testament*, 1 Cor. iii. 6. Nay, *Rom. xv. 8.* our Blessed Saviour is called a *Deacon*, for Minister and Deacon are the same in the *Greek*; so is Emperor and General in the *Latin* the same, and yet no Man in his right Wits will say, that every General of an Army is an Emperor. I grant, that in those Churches where any Apostle resided, commonly they held the Government in their own Hands, and so only Presbyters and Deacons under them. And, in other Places, where the Converts were few, a Bishop and Deacons might do the Work without Presbyters. But *Epiphanius*, against *Aerius*, tells us, *Because the Preaching was new--- All Things could not be settled by the Apostles at once, and where none were found fit to be Priests, they were contented with a Bishop, who could not be without his Deacons for Mini-*

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strations; but the Church was not yet compleated in its Offices, since nothing is perfect at first, but, in process of Time, all that it needs was fixed. But the Instances I have given are of compleat Churches, which had all the Three Orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. I grant, every Bishop is a Presbyter, but no Presbyter as such, is a Bishop, for the superior includes the inferior, but it can never hold on the contrary.

But the chief Objection against the Necessity of Episcopal Ordination is taken from 1 Tim. iv. 14. *Neglect not the Gift that is in Thee, which was given Thee by Prophecy, with the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, This is the only Text that can be brought to countenance Presbyterian Ordination. But this will not answer their Purpose, for supposing the *Πρεσβυτεριον* was a Senate, how can it be made appear to be a Senate of ordinary Presbyters? St. Chrysostom, and divers of the Fathers are positive that it was not: And their Reason is, that Timothy was a Bishop, and it was never heard that Presbyters could ordain a Bishop. The Presbyterians, to avoid Timothy's being a Bishop, say he was an Evangelist, that is, an extraordinary Officer. But then, how could ordinary Presbyters Ordain him? Could they, or any besides God, or such as have an extraordinary Commission from him, give a Commission to represent him extraordinarily? But that it was no ordinary Presbyterian Ordination, appears from 2 Tim. i. 6. St. Paul laid on his Hands, which makes it so far from a Presbyterian Ordination, that it's the Pattern of an Episcopal One, by a Bishop, with the Assistance

Assistance of *Presbyters* : For you will allow *St. Paul* to be above them, both in Order and Power. But *Calvin*, with divers of the Ancients understands the *Presbytery* not to signify a College of *Presbyters*, but *Donum Presbyteratus*, the *Gift of the Presbyterate*, and so the Text may be render'd, *Neglect not the Gift of the Presbyterate, which is in thee, and which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of Hands*. What I have said, is sufficient to shew, it was no Presbyterial Ordination ; the Gift was conferr'd by the laying on of *St. Paul's* Hands, (*στα*) and only (*μεν*) with the laying on of the *Presbytery*.

Having made appear, from the Holy Scriptures, the Order and Powers of Bishops, as superior to all other ordinary Church Officers, I go on to shew that they were to continue in all Ages of the Church : *Lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World*, *Mat. xxviii. 20*. It could not be the Apostles personally only to whom our Blessed Saviour gave this Promise, for none of them did live much above One Age, but to them and their Successors, the Bishops, who in a regular Succession, were to continue to the End of the World. The Apostles did ordain Bishops in the Churches they planted, *Acts xiv. 23*. and they again were to commit the same Office and Trust to other faithful men, who shall be able to teach others, *2 Tim. ii*. compare this with *1 Tim. i. 18*. for, as *Grotius*, on *Mat. xxviii. 20*. observes, seeing this Promise extends to the End of the World, and the Apostles were not to live so long, no doubt *Christ* here, under the Person of the Apostles, designs also their Successors in Office.

Let us proceed now and see what the Judgment of the Earliest Fathers was as to our Point. *St. Clement of Rome*, (who was co-temporary with *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, Two great Apostles and Pillars of the Church, whom *St. Paul*, in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, calls his *Fellow-Labourer, whose Name is in the Book of Life*, who, as *Theodore* writes, laid *St. Peter's* Head in the Grave, and succeeded both in his See and Martyrdom) tells us in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, that *The Apostles preaching in Countries and Cities, ordained the First-Fruits of them (proving them by the Spirit) Bishops and Deacons of such as should believe. Neither was this any new thing: For, says he, it was said of Bishops and Deacons, many Ages ago, I will constitute their Bishops in Righteousness, and their Deacons in Faith.* He says afterwards, "The Apostles knew, by
 "our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that there should
 "Contentions arise upon the Account of the *Episcopate*. And therefore having a perfect Fore-
 "Knowledge of this, they appointed Persons,
 "as we have before said; and then gave Di-
 "rection, when they should die, how other
 "chosen and approved Men should succeed in
 "their Ministry.

So from this Apostolical Father we have the Ordination of Bishops by the Apostles asserted, and that Care was taken by them to secure a Succession of Bishops, according to *2 Tim. ii. 2.*

St. Polycarp, the Angel of the Church of Smirna, shall be the next: The Inscription of his Epistle to the *Philippians*, bears that it comes from *him and the Presbyters with him*; and in the Epistle
 it

it self, there are several Things relating to the Behaviour of *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, which, tho' to my Purpose, I have not Time to dwell on them. The Church of *Smirna*, in her Epistle on the Martydom of *St. Polycarp*, has these remarkable Words, *He was a truly Apostolical and Prophetical Teacher, and Bishop of the Catholick Church at Smirna.*

Co-temporary with *Polycarp*, the Disciple of *St. John*, and as *Ireneus* says, ordained Bishop of *Smirna* by the Apostles, was *Ignatius*, Bishop of *Antioch*, whose Character is given in the Account of his Martyrdom, *That he was a Man in all things like unto the Apostles.* He speaks plainly throughout his Epistles of Three distinct Orders in the Churches he writes to, to wit, Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons: For Instance, in that to the *Trallians*, he takes notice, " That they were subject to their Bishop as to Jesus Christ --without your Bishop you should do nothing. Also be subject to your Presbyters, as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ. And in Sect. 3. In like manner, says he, Reverence the Deacons as Jesus Christ; and the Bishops as the Father; and the Presbyters as the *Sanhedrim* of God; without these there is no Church.

In his Epistle to the *Philadelphians*, "Attend to the Bishop, to the Presbytery, and to the Deacons. In his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, "It will become you to run according to the Will of your Bishop, as also you do---Let us take heed therefore, that we do not set our selves against our Bishop, that we may be the Servants of God.

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I shall only add one Passage more from this holy Bishop and Martyr's Epistles, and it is out of that to the *Magnesian*s. "It is therefore fitting, says he, that we should not only be called Christians, but be so: As some call their Governor Bishop, but yet do all things without him. But I can never think, that such as these have a good Conscience, seeing they are not gather'd together according to Gods Commandment: I Recommend these things to the serious Consideration of my Dissenting Brethren, and I pray God, to give them a right understanding in all things.

Oh good God! says a famous Writer, speaking of St. *Ignatius*; If thy blessed Martyr *Ignatius* now liv'd, and saw the Insolencies, how would he think, that he himself had fallen among worse Beasts than those that were prepar'd for him.

Ireneus Bishop of *Lyons*, who in his Younger days convers'd with St. *Polycarp*, and Flourish'd about the Year of Our Lord 180 says, iii. Chap. of his III. Book, "We can reckon those Bishops, who were Constituted by the Apostles in the several Churches, and their Successors, all the way to our own Time, who neither taught or knew any such Doctrines as these *Hereticks* [*Valentians*] have dream'd; and if the Apostles knew any such hidden Mysteries, they would certainly have deliver'd them chiefly to those to whom they committed the Churches themselves. Here is a plain Testimony for the Apostolical Institution of Bishops, and their Succession.

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He affirms, that the Apostles left the Bishops their Successors, giving them their own Power and Authority, Lib. iii. C. 4. And again, The true Doctrine is that of the Apostles---according to the Succession of the Bishops, to whom they committed the Churches every where. And again he tells us, that the Hereticks were much later than the Bishops, whom the Apostles entrusted with the Churches. That they deriv'd their Succession from the Apostles, who with the Succession of the Bishoprick received the true gift [Charisma] of the Truth, according to the will of the Father. Here the Episcopal and Apostolical Dignity are one in the Language of Irenaeus.

Tertullian in his Book, *De Baptismo*, Chap. 17. says, "That the Bishop had the Power of giving Baptism, and after him the Presbyters and Deacons, but yet not without the Authority of the Bishop, which is necessary for the Honour and Peace of the Church. And *De praescript adversus Haereticos*, Chap. 32. He challenges the Hereticks of his Time, "to show the beginning of their Churches, the Succession of their Bishops from the beginning, deriving from the Apostles, or Apostolical Men. For after this manner the Apostolick Churches reckon, as the Church of Smyrna says Polycarp, was placed in it by St. John, and Clemens by St. Peter in Rome. Many more Citations from the Fathers might be brought to Confirm this Truth, as Justin Martyr, Origen, and St. Cyprian, but the Time will not allow; and that is done to the full, by the Learned Author of a Book Intituled, *The Principles of the Cyprianick Age*. And besides the chief Advocates for Presbyterial Government.

vernment, allow Episcopacy to have been in the Church before *St. Cyprian's* Time, who suffered Martyrdom in the Year of Our Lord 258. Besides, we have the unanimous Consent of the Ecclesiastical Historians, *Eusebius* and others, who give account of the first planting of Christianity, and brought down the History of the Church to their own Times : They give us the Names of those that were over the then famous Churches of *Jerusalem*, *Antioch*, *Rome* and *Alexandria*, and the Succession of them all along.

The Dissenters, as well as we, believe some things there are no greater Evidences for, than there is for Episcopacy : To Instance in the Canon of the Holy Scripture, that such Books of it were Penn'd by such inspired Writers : That such a Gospel, to wit, *St. Mark's*, or such an Epistle, *St. James's*, or *St. Jude's*, or any other ought to be receiv'd, as Canonical Scripture, there is no greater Evidence than is brought for Episcopacy. There's a deal of Evidence in the Apostolical Monuments for Episcopacy, but none for the Canonicalness of the named Gospel or Epistles. The Canonical Books were not separated from the Apocryphal, till after the decease of all the Apostles, that is, till the second Century. Nay the Learned tell us, that some Books were not universally receiv'd even in the Third ; it was only a few Men that could be Judges, that such and such Books were Written by Persons Divinely Inspired, compared with those that could not but know, what Form of Government was instituted by the Apostles, and continu'd from their time in the Churches. Every Man may be suppos'd to know

know the Government of his Country, even before, as well as in his own Time, whether it is Monarchical, or that of Common-wealth, tho' they be Strangers to the Statute-Books. But after all, if Men will be Contentious, and shut their Eyes against the clearest Light, there is no more to be said to them, but what the Apostle says, to the Contentious and Schismatical *Corinthians*, we have no such Custom, nor the Churches of God.

My Third Head is, *That no Dissenters from the Episcopal Church, have the Power of conferring Orders; and consequently they cannot authorize any to Preach, or Administer the Sacraments.*

The serious Consideration of this, made me uneasy when I was a Dissenting Teacher, and had good Encouragement among them; and the Conviction I at last receiv'd of the Truth of this Doctrine, after a disinterested Enquiry, and reading the best Authors I could meet with on both sides, made me leave the Dissenters, and beg to be receiv'd into the Church. I bless God for the Satisfaction and Peace of my Mind, that my Reconciliation to the Church has given me; and I doubt not, but if my other Dissenting Brethren, would bring themselves to lay aside Prejudice, Interest and Party, and search impartially for Truth, they would follow my Example, and find the Comforts of it.

Having already prov'd *Episcopal Ordination* from the Holy Scriptures and earliest Antiquity, and that holy Orders continued to be given afterwards by the Bishops of the Churches, in a regular Succession from the Apostles, and that no Ordination was perform'd without an Apostle or Bishop; I think the Consequence is clear, that Dissenters have no valid Orders. A straight Line is a Rule both for straight and crooked Lines; so the Establishing of *Episcopal Ordination* in the Manner I have done, quite overthrows the groundless Pretensions of the Dissenters. I Challenge them to name any other Ordination than *Episcopal*, that

was approv'd of in any regularly Constituted Church, for the first 1500 Years ; or to find any Church within that Time, whose History is clearly given by approv'd Historians, who had sufficient Means to know the Facts that they relate, that was without Bishops to Ordain in it, and to govern it. Is not the Succession of Bishops in the famous Churches of *Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Constantinople* and *Rome*, as well as of many other Churches, clearly deliver'd to us by the *Ecclesiastical Historians*, and other Writers of entire Credit ? Is not *Episcopal Ordination* and their Power of Jurisdiction, plainly declared by the Apostolical Canons, and the most celebrated General Councils ? Are not all Ordinations without a Bishop against the Canons and Constitutions of Councils universally Condemn'd ? Nay even *Jerome* himself, who shew'd some Peevishness against the Bishops, reserves the Power of Ordination to the Bishop: *Tertullians* Argument against the *Hereticks*, is as conclusive against the Dissenters, *None of the Hereticks*, says he, *were able to shew, that their Churches were Founded, or their First Bishops ordain'd by any Apostle, or any Apostolick Person; persevering in Communion with the Apostles, yet this was the way the Apostolick Churches, (pray take notice) observ'd in their Reckonings ;* and he instances in *Smyrna* and *Rome*. Nay in this Matter, the Dissenters out-run those Hereticks, who were not against Bishops, but only against Orthodox Bishops. *Aerius*, even amongst the ancient Hereticks, stands by himself alone in this Point. How zealous were the Holy Fathers, whose Words I have cited, for a continued Succession of Bishops ? How can they who have none, have sufficient Orders, or their Sects be reputed Churches ? They are *Self originated*, they take and give Orders themselves, contrary to the Belief and Practice of all the Churches of *Christ* before *Calvin's* Time, Their Work is not of God, but of Men, against the Institutions of God, and the Practice of the Christian Churches in all Ages and Places, and therefore *it must come to nought* :

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The Rule of *Vincentius Lirinensis*, *Quod semper, quod ubique quod ab omnibus creditum est, hoc vere, proprieque catholicum est.* That is truly and properly a Catholick Doctrine, which was believ'd always, every where, and by all. This is plainly the Case of Episcopacy, and therefore *Presbyterian, Independent, Anabaptistical*, and other dissenting Ordination and Government, which never was known or receiv'd in any Church for 1500 Years from our Blessed Saviour, must be Anti-catholick and Antichristian. And thus I think the *Third Head* is sufficiently clear'd, *That Dissenters have no Ordination.*

And yet this further appears, by taking notice of the many Divisions and Sub-divisions which are amongst them, and no Agreement as to the Point of **ORDINATION**. The *Anabaptists* deny the Validity of the Ordination among the *Presbyterians*, and the *Presbyterians* deny the Ordinations both of the *Independents* and *Anabaptists*; so that the Ordinations of one Set of Dissenters is condemn'd by all the rest, and all of them by all the Churches of *Christ*. And as there is a Nullity in their Orders, none of them can administer Sacraments with spiritual Effects, Seal God's Covenant, Bind or Loose, Remit, or Retain Sins, for which Ends our Blessed Saviour has provided his Church with an Authoriz'd Ministry, to continue to the End of the World. I shall conclude this Head with the Words of the Learned Bishop *Taylor*, to whose Writings I have been much obliged for discovering my former Errors. "Tis evident, says he, "and notorious in Scripture, there is no Ordination but "an Apostolical-Hand was in it, one of the ruling "Clergy, and as certain in descending Ages, Bishops "always had it in their Power, it was never deny'd "to the Bishop, never imputed to the Presbyter. "Nay, St. *Jerome*, in his Heat against the Bishops, "excepted Ordination; so these that deny Ordination to the Bishops, as a good Writer well expresses it, They, like *Julian* their Fore-runner, destroy "and starve the Flock, and take away the Shepherds,

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" and

“ and disperse the Pastors, and tempt God’s Provi-
 “ dence to Extraordinaries, and put the People to
 “ hard Shifts, and turn the Channels of Salvation
 “ quite another way, and leave the Church to a per-
 “ petual Uncertainty, whether she be alive or dead ;
 “ and the People destitute of the Life of their Souls,
 “ and their Daily Bread, and their Spiritual Com-
 “ forts, and Holy-Blessings.

All I shall add on this Head, is, That seeing it is
 evident the Dissenters have no valid Orders, have no
 Right to Preach, Administer the Sacraments, nor
 Power of Discipline, their Censures or Anathema’s
 can never hurt us that leave them ; especially when
 we have no worldly Interest in our view, nor prospect
 of mending our worldly Circumstances, but do it
 purely from Conviction and Conscience, and to a-
 void Sin in partaking any more in their Schism a-
 gainst the Church, and in their Opposition to what
 we believe to be the Institution of *Christ*.

The Fourth Head I promis’d to speak to, is, The
 Necessity of an Outward Call to the Ministry,
*No man taketh this Office to himself, but he that is cal-
 led of God.* Such as presume to take this Honour to
 themselves, are *Self-made Ministers*, and come under
 the Curse of those *that run and are not sent*, of whom
 God complains, *I have not sent them, and yet they run*,
 xiv. 14. *How shall they Preach, except they be sent ?* Rom.
 x. 15. The Church is a visible Society, called, *The
 Kingdom of God ; The City of God ; The Household of God ;
 The Polity*, which we Translate, *the Common-wealth of
 Israel ; The Body of Christ* : He is the Head of this So-
 ciety, and has appointed Governors and Officers of
 it, and they must have an outward Call to their re-
 spective Stations in this Kingdom, this Family. For,
 as One says, *none goes into a well-govern’d Family, and
 says, I will be Steward here*, It was the Sin of *Jerobo-
 am*, and the ruin of his House, to admit every one
 that would, to be one of his Priests. *Aaron*, as you
 have heard, was solemnly called and conse-
 crated

crated by the Command of Almighty God, to the Priesthood, and after him, *Eleazar* his Son and Successor, and thus it was to continue until the end of the Legal Priesthood : And tho' the Priesthood was made Hereditary in that Family, yet such and such Qualifications were required, without which they could not be admitted, as you may see at length, *Levitic. xxi. 17., &c.* And the Blemishes which were Impediments of their Consecration. Nay, the Heathens did not admit their Priests without a Call, as well as the Qualifications, which they judged Necessary. But we have clearly set down in the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, the Ministerial Outward Call, first of *Christ* to the Office of being our High-Priest, in the Words of our Text, *He glorified not himself, &c.* After his Baptism he was solemnly Inaugurate into this Office by a Voice from Heaven, *the Heavens were open'd, and the Spirit of God descended like a Dove, and lighted upon him; And lo ! a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, Mat. iii. 16, 17.* And again, *Mark ix. 7. This is my beloved Son, hear him.* Our Lord chose his Apostles. whom he sent, as his Father sent him, and *LXX* Disciples. And the Apostles, and their immediate Successors, had the Gift of *discerning Spirits*, that is, of *knowing by Inspiration, who were fit for the Ministry; 1 Cor. xii. 1 Tim. iii. 13.* and accordingly they chose and laid their Hands on them. The Apostles likewise ordain'd Deacons, *Acts v.* But when this Gift of *discerning Spirits* ceas'd in the Church, in the After-ages, enquiry was made into the Doctrine, Lives and Morals, of the Candidates for the holy Ministry. The First General Council of Nice, *Can. 2.* declares, *That a Time and a Trial is necessary to all, before they can be made Clergy-men.* And the Council of Sardis decrees, *That Candidates shall be examin'd with all Exactness and Care-- And undergo Probation in the Inferior, before they be admitted to the Superior Order:-- Since the Apostle and Doctor of the Gentiles forbids the making hasty Ordinations, Can. 10.* In Confor-

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mity to the Apostles Rule, and to these Councils,
 and the Practice of the Catholick Church. The
 Church of *England* in her Preface to her Offices of
 Ordination, after her asserting the Three Orders
 of *Bishops, Priests and Deacons*, from the Scriptures
 and Ancient Authors, says, "These Three were ever-
 " more had in such reverend Estimation, that no
 " Man might presume to Execute any of them, ex-
 " cept he were first Call'd, Try'd, Examin'd, and
 " known to have such Qualities as are requisite for
 " the same; and also by Publick Prayer, with Im-
 " position of Hands, were approv'd and admitted
 " thereunto by lawfull Authority. Thus we have
 an outward Call to the sacred Offices of the Holy
 Ministry, brought down from the beginning to
 this Day.

The Evidence I have briefly produc'd for an out-
 ward Call to the Ministry is so full and Convincing,
 that I hope it will satisfy all candid and unprejudiced
 Persons, tho' much more might be said on this Sub-
 ject. Let the Dissenters then take this Matter seri-
 ously into their Consideration. Let such of them as
 assume the Office of Preachers and Ministers consider
 what Mission they have, and how they will be able to
 answer our Apostle's Question, *How can they Preach*
except they be sent? Let them consider their self assu-
 med Authority in sacred Matters, contrary to the
 Practice of the Apostolical and Primitive Churches,
 and the whole Catholick Church, for 1500 Years.
 Let them finally consider the Example of our Blessed
 Saviour, the Author both of our Religion and Priest-
 hood, in the Words of our Text, *Who glorified not him-*
self, &c. Though, not only all the *Treasures of Wis-*
dom and Knowledge, but even *the Fullness of the Godhead*
dwelt in him, yet he took not this Office upon him, till
 called of God to it; How then can the Pretences to
 any Gifts impower Men to be Ministers? This is to
 set themselves up above Christ. Horrid Blasphemy!
 Our Blessed Saviour says, *If I honour my self; my honour*

is nothing : It is my Father that honoureth me, John viii. 54. Honour may be deserved by our selves, but always comes from others. God is the Fountain, and through and from Christ all the Honour of Evangelical Ministry is deriv'd, and the Channel through which it passes appointed by him, *John xx. 21. As my Father sent me, so send I you, &c. I am with you alway, even unto the end.*

The Dissenters not only do what they can to Subvert and Destroy this *Divine Mission*, but some also oppose Evangelical Doctrines, and lessen the Privileges of the Infants of Christian Parents, and put them in a worse Condition than the Children of the *Jews* were in, under the former Dispensation, who were admitted into the Covenant, and made Members of the then Church. As being Baptiz'd is *putting on Christ*, and an Admission into the Privileges and Benefits of the New Covenant, so refusing them Baptism, is an Exclusion of them from the most valuable Blessings. And for their pretended want of Capacity of that Sacrament, does not that Objection lye as strong against all the Off-spring of *Abraham* in their Infancy? And yet the Child that was not Circumcised the Eight Day was to be cut off. These likewise set up corrupt Nature, and exalt unsanctify'd Reason against Revelation. The generality of Dissenters are Anti-ministerial and Anti-magistratical. Many of their Doctrines are contrary to the Analogy of Faith, and the Moral Law. Many of them contemn Learning, and so are led away with the error of the Wicked. They separate from the Church, and do all they can to draw others into their *Schism*; whereas the Apostle bids us *mark them that cause Divisions and avoid them* : And if all good Christians are bound to avoid them, God can not be with them. They are always for Divisions, and always divided among themselves. And as I took notice before, they Preach up Free-grace to the utter Destruction of Good Works.

Wherefore, my dear Friends, let me beseech you, for the Church's sake, the Pillar and ground of Truth,
for

for the Gospel's sake; for our Lord's sake, *who purchas'd the Church with his own Blood*; for your precious Souls, their sake, which are more Valuable to you and in themselves, than all the World besides, *Come out from among them, touch not their unhallow'd things, and God will receive you.* Besides, the uncontraverted Mission of the Bishops and Ministers of the Church of England, is not the Famous all the Christian World over, for the learning of her Divines, for the most Elaborate and Edifying Preaching, and for the Piety both of her Clergy, and her orderly People?

Let me sum up this Discourse in the Words of one of the Learned Doctor's of this renowned Church, which are as follow, "Whosoever then with unsanctify'd Hands, that is, with unconsecrated Hands, shall dare to Officiate in the Ministerial Office, separated by God, by Gifts, by Graces, by Publick Order, by an Establish'd Rite, by the Institution of *Jeus Christ*, by the Descent of the *Holy Gho^t*, by the Practice of the Apostles, by the Practice of 17 Ages of the Catholick Church, by the necessity of the Thing by Reason, by Analogy to the Discourses of all the wise and good Men in the World; that Man, like his Predecessor *Corah*, brings an unhallowed Censer, which shall never send up a right Cloud of Incense to God; But yet that unhallowed Smoak shall kindle a Fire, even the Wrath of God, which at last shall destroy the Sacrifice, his Work shall be Consumed, And when upon his Repentance, himself shall escape yet it shall be so as by Fire, that is, with Danger, and Loss, and Shame, and Trouble; for our God is a Consuming Fire

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I shall Conclude all, with a Petition out of the Liturgy *More Especially, we Pray for the good Estate of the Catholick Church; that it may be so guided and govern'd by the Good Spirit of God; that all who profess and call themselves Christians, may be led into the Way of Truth, and hold the Faith in Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of Life.*

F I N I S.